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CONCERNING BEING AND ESSENCE

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CONCERNING BEING AND ESSENCE *(De Ente et Essentia)*

BY

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
"Ad Fratres et Socios."

Translated from the Latin with
the Addition of a Preface by

GEORGE G. LECKIE



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“.....relations exist in God really; in proof whereof we may consider that in relations alone is found something which is only in the apprehension....This is not found in any other genus; forasmuch as other genera, as quantity and quality, in their strict and proper meaning, signify something inherent in a subject. But relation in its own proper meaning signifies only what relates to another.”

“Now whatever has an accidental existence in creatures, when considered as transferred to God, has a substantial existence.”

Summa Theologica, Qs. 27-49, Pars Prima.

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PREFACE

IN RECENT times St. Thomas Aquinas has come to suggest problems and solutions which are of the first order of importance for speculative thought. And I do not mean merely for the history of philosophy or for the cloister-like seclusion of the class room in mediaeval philosophy. He is something more than a mere interval in the creative advance of evolution. First principles never become obsolete, and the doctrine of St. Thomas is replete with steady and rigorous ideas which can accomplish much in clarifying the present confusion of the arts and sciences. It is therefore time that he should leave the company of Latin scholars with their forbidding array of critical apparatus, footnotes, comments upon and citations of comparative sources, and the dead weight of the gloss which preserves the letter but destroys the spirit.

This translation of the *De Ente et Essentia* renders into English a very compact and highly significant matrix of arguments concerning the status of essence, being and existence. As a preparation for its principal task the *opusculum* examines the character of incomplex terms, genus, species and difference, how they stand to each other within the defined whole of an essence and in so doing how the incomplex terms are signs which signify the nature of individuated and unified substantial wholes existing in nature independently of the human mind. In addition, when St. Thomas passes from corporeal substances as such to "intelligences," man and the angels, an example is given of the rhetorical shift by which scholastic thought effected the trope from the literal to the figurative. This rhetorical shift

is in itself a study in the 'superposition' of concepts or isomorphic relationships. Modern formal logic makes the excessive claim that it has accomplished the first real advance in logic since Aristotle. If indeed it has measurably multiplied the *modes of predication* and *relational order* which can be grasped by voluntary synthetic acts of thought, still it most certainly has not clarified the modes of signification (*symbolic reference*) handled so astutely by the scholastics.

The reader, if he is accustomed to the inorganic and loose discursiveness of modern philosophy, nay, at times its almost total lack of order and discipline, may find that it requires a special act of the will to master the concepts of St. Thomas. But if he does master even the brief content of this little work he will find himself possessed of what may be called a prolegomena to every past and future system of philosophy.

Nor does the last sentence claim too much. St. Thomas was not a mere transitive conductor, namely, a compiler, translator, commentator and encyclopedist, an exalted eclectic, careless in his sums of addition. He was possessed of a bold and original mind capable of effecting a monumental synthesis of principles gathered from widely diverse sources. In his works Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, the patristics, Proclus, Porphyry, Boethius, St. Augustine, Averroes, Avicenna, and a host of Latin doctors, to mention a few, are sifted and cleansed. As a matter of course it is true that running through all of his post-Athenian sources there is a principle of traditional unity, namely, the "logos tradition," however diffused it may become at times, derived from Plato and Aristotle. It is also very significant that St. Thomas refers to Aristotle as the Philosopher and to Averroes as the Commentator. The *Summa Theologica* then, his crowning work, is more than a sum of theology. It is the cumulative apex of some seventeen centuries of continuous tradition, both pagan and Christian, in the service of theological science.

Theology was in truth the final cause, and though indeed philosophy was in subordination to it, still philosophy had an autonomy of its own. Logic is the common instrument of philosophy and natural science, dealing with the natural order of substances and leading up to metaphysics or the doctrine of being *qua* being. By a shift in intention the modes of logic lead from corporeal substances by analogy to insights concerning extra-natural entities. Metaphysics or first philosophy deals with the transcendental predicates: being and non-being, one and many, true and false, good and evil, thing and something, examining the order of nature and the order of reason to test their accord, namely, the similitude or commensuration of the beings of nature to the beings of reason. Logic is the instrument for formulating simple and complex modes, the centrum of philosophy, and in order for philosophy to be a means to theological science logic must be promoted in its own order as if it were an end in itself. Philosophy as instrumented through logic deals with the natural order and in so doing supplies evidence for the confirmation of faith. Indeed it supplies the literal terms (grammar) from which rhetorical method advances to an understanding of intelligences and finally to an analogical though finite and imperfect grasp of God's infinite being.

The relation of philosophy to natural science was in essence the same in peripatetic scholasticism as it is today. A lack of emphasis on the discovery and perfection of mechanical or instrumental material and efficient means need not obscure the relationship, since engineering does not exhaust the whole of human science. Scholasticism clearly appreciated the fact that before science could begin there must be a discipline independent of natural things in terms of which propositions *about* nature can be formulated. Today the pragmatists in their overtures to logical positivism seem inclined to join two estates

as a result of the recognition that science must possess a general method of procedure in regard to its subject matter, an instrument moreover which can be understood in some sense at least as a result of voluntary synthetic acts or syntactic operations. This is an open concession to the Aristotelian truism that it is absurd to seek knowledge and at the same time the means for obtaining knowledge. Science consists of propositions about natural things, but it must so consist by means of an independent discipline which supplies it with dependable first principles. In addition it must explain the relation of rational modes to natural modes and how the former derive their being and truth from the latter if it desires to avoid mythology however empirical or rational. It is interesting if somewhat disquieting to watch the speculative psyche pass through its stages of recapitulation. But I would not imply that the pragmatists have advanced to the stage of explaining the relationship of the sign to the thing signified.

The *De Ente et Essentia* is a complete whole in itself in the sense that the axioms, definitions, postulates and initial theorems of Euclid constitute a whole. But even so the student may welcome some extrinsic help, since the propositions refer beyond themselves to other texts and are referred to from other texts. The *De Ente* is in effect an argument matrix or doctrine function for the other Thomistic works.

I believe that the most valuable assistance which this preface can offer is that of explaining and elucidating the principal concepts of the text. There are of course alternate routes by which such help may be conveyed, as for instance that of historical and comparative criticism joined to a scrutiny of genetic origins. But, again referring to Euclid, I observe that one might read all the foot-notes in Sir Thomas Heath's excellent edition, gathering thereby a vast quantum of assorted facts. Still it suffices to say that the information could have no genuine

ground for being remembered without a grasp of the demonstrated order and connection of the propositions. After a brief biography of St. Thomas, I propose, therefore, to set my sail boldly before the wind of doctrine. I concede, however, that the nautical maxim to the effect that even a good wind is an evil wind, contains a relevant warning.

I

BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

AT ROCCASECCA near the little village of Aquino, towards Naples, St. Thomas Aquinas was born *circa* 1225. His family was descended from an illustrious line of noblemen, his own father having the rank of count. For those who lend credence to signs it must seem strange that the name of his birthplace was so inauspicious for one who was to become a fountain of scholastic wisdom.

His early education began with the Benedictine Monks at Monte Cassino, but he later went to Naples where among his masters were Petrus Martinus and Petrus de Hibernia. From Martinus he learned the *trivium* and from Petrus de Hibernia the *quadrivium*. The trivium and quadrivium made up the preliminary matriculation of studies by way of preparation for a professional vocation: law, theology or medicine. The trivium or trivial arts, consisting of grammar, logic and rhetoric, composed the three modes of discourse by which discursive expression is mastered, so that the trivium is primarily instrumental. The quadrivium, or the four ways, is composed of geometry, arithmetic (theory of numbers), music and astronomy, and may be considered as the natural or literal subject matter of the trivium in the divine order of creation. It is curious that the expression liberal arts is derived equivocally

from the Latin word for book and the Latin word for free, so that as a consequence the liberal arts are book arts which make the human spirit free from the body and its association with particular things.

After having joined the Dominican Order at Naples, St. Thomas subsequently set out for the Convent at Cologne where he came into contact with Albertus Magnus, his doctrinal master. It is fairly well authenticated that to Albertus Magnus, St. Thomas owes his vocation to philosophy and his Aristotelian initiation. This is not the place to discuss what St. Thomas derived from his master in detail. But it is often pointed out that Albertus Magnus assembled the material and began the foundation of what St. Thomas later erected into a cathedral of doctrine. It is true that St. Thomas soon began to substitute the method of running paraphrase for the metaphrases of Albertus Magnus in commenting on the Aristotelian works. His thought is free from glosses and digressions, exact and rigorous, finely balanced and directed towards its central object with a clear vision and great foresight. The two *Summae* exhibit a reduction to a few simple modes of all the complex modes of argument employed by his predecessors. His mind was primarily architectonic and constructive, attributes which do much to account for the almost miraculous organization of doctrine which he accomplished.

St. Thomas accompanied Albert to Paris in 1245, and thence back to Cologne in 1248. In 1252 the general of his order called him back to teach at Paris. This is the period of his public lectures, first as a bachelor and later as a master. The date of his mastership corresponds with that of St. Bonaventura in 1257. After a removal from Paris and a residence in Rome where he delivered at the papal court the truths which he had meditated, he again returned to Paris in 1268. While in Rome he came into contact with William of Moerbeke who is known

as the major translator of the Aristotelian works from the Greek to the Latin. It is important that St. Thomas avoids the translations of the Arabians and Jews and returns to the original sources for information. His work seems to have been predominately occupied with the problem of reorganizing the liberal arts and in addition the faculty of theology in respect to doctrine. This issued from his Aristotelian background. The two *Summae* supply a basis of internal or doctrinal organization which is something other than the organization of the physical plant of a university and the building up of a complex corps of administrative executives. During this period of his stay at Paris St. Thomas took a leading part in the serious doctrinal controversies being waged there. At all points he combated the Averroism of Siger of Brabant, although he retains such principles of Averroes in his own system as seemed to him consistent with Aristotle and the Christian faith. Despite the protests of the rector and masters of the faculty of theology at Paris, he was again called to Italy in 1272 to organize a studium generale, a center of theological studies for a province of his order. On his way to Lyons, whither Gregory X had called him to assist at the work of a General Council, he died in 1274, being then forty-eight years of age.

In 1323, nearly a century after his birth and a half century after his death, Thomas Aquinas was canonized a saint by Pope John XXII. Whatever may be the proper statement of the grounds of sainthood, his vast intellectual achievements are certainly events out of the natural order and appropriate to a miracle. His brothers in religion called him 'the angelic doctor'.

It will doubtless be greatly to the advantage of the reader to have a chronological order of the works of St. Thomas, which follows, as taken from page twenty of *Le Thomisme*, par Étienne Gilson, troisième édition, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1927.

29. De unitate intellectus contra Averroistas. 1269-1272.
30. De substantiis separatis (after 1260, or about 1272).
31. De mixtione elementorum. (1273).
32. De motu cordis. (1273).
33. De natura verbi intellectus. (Authentic ?).
34. De intellectu et intelligibili.
35. Quaestiones quodlibetales.
 Quaest. 7, 9, 10, 11, 8. (1263-1268, or 1272-1273).
 (Italy).
 Quaest. 1 to 6, 1269-1272. (Paris).
36. Quaestiones disputatae.
 De veritate, 1256-1259.
 De potentia, 1259-1263, or 1256-1259.
 De spiritualibus creaturis, 1269.
 De anima, 1269-1270.
 De unione Verbi incarnati, 1268.
 De malo, 1263-1268.
 De virtutibus, 1270-1272, or 1269-1272.

(Note: See the edition cited for exact arrangement and explanation.)

II

THOMISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY

I

Basic Features of Doctrine

As a result of his strict adherence to Aristotelianism St. Thomas is at infinite pains to clarify and correct the heavy charge of Platonism, neo-Platonism and Stoicism in the atmosphere of scholastic tradition. The reintroduction of the works of Aristotle, translated directly from the Greek, necessitated a complete reform of philosophy and theology. This reconstruction was primarily based on a re-clarification of logic, since logic expresses reflexively the structure of modes of knowing. The Angelic Doctor's clarity of intellect was greatly

enhanced by this attention to logic, allowing him to direct his energy immediately upon the architectonic reform of doctrine. Mythological cosmology, the "royal lies" of Plato, were to be measured by a program for scientific knowledge the basic propositions of which could be *about* things of nature.

Theology studies the supernatural order of existence as revealed in the word of God, whereas philosophy examines the natural order as comprehended by reason. Reason demonstrates the grounds of credibility for faith, and does so by adducing evidence from the natural order. Thus it moves from the better known to the less known. In the genetic order of knowing, the better known passes from natures to sensible species to universals, whereas in the order of intellect there is a reverse movement from universals to sensible species to natures. The former is the order of abstraction, the latter the order of signification. This implies that knowing begins with the concrete substantial unity, or thing, and advances in the order of abstraction by a series of steps to a grasp of those entities which are univocal signs of one in many, namely, universals. Beyond these it infers to simple substances constituted of essence and existence rather than of matter and form like concrete entities. There is a continuous order of grades of being, each grade possessing its proper operation and hence its proper difference and perfection, from natural entities, through quasi-material entities (man), to immaterial entities (angels), to God as pure act, one and unique.

Such a graded ordination entails an order of knowing in which by shifts from one mode of apprehension to another the intellect passes from the literal to the figurative by analogy, namely, from modes of signation, to modes of attribution, to modes of proportion. The modes of the figurative are superimposed upon the literal by isomorphic relationships or

analogies of structure in which the literal determinants are dropped, *i.e.* by an increasing remotion of attributes.

To the extent that the sciences cut off some special aspect of nature and examine its properties by abstraction in order to formulate propositions *about* the natural entities, the Thomistic program for knowledge is not out of harmony with the methods of modern science. For St. Thomas, however, a nature is a substance primarily and only secondarily a qualified thing, as for instance quantity is its first accident but not commensurately equivalent to substance. The synthetic interpretation rests throughout on analysis. Logic is the instrument which works with analytic forms, modes of composition and division, and thus exploits the structural forms by means of which propositions are about the things of nature. But science has an *analytic remotion*, or formal distance, from individuated natures, seeing that science deals with the universal which is always true or at least true for the most part.¹ From this it is to be understood that the terms which enter into propositions of science must be univocal signs of many, namely, universals abstracted from all contingent increments, so that the abstracted quiddity or whatness of the thing is grasped by way of a mode of rational being expressive of the essential or necessary features of the thing of nature. For St. Thomas philosophy passes through science to God, whereas modern science simply passes beyond the fact to the proposition about the fact, and worships, if at all, efficiency.

Where the adherents of St. Augustine, namely, the Platonists generically, discovered innate ideas and infused illumination, St. Thomas posited an *a posteriori* program for grades of continuous abstraction whereby not absolute but only relative knowledge is possible. His neglect of the ontological proof of

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, In II 1. De Anima, 12. "Scientia non est particularium, singularium, corruptibilium."

God's existence in favor of *a posteriori* arguments taken from principles of Aristotelian physics sums up his rejection of the *a priori*. Moreover the multiplicity of the natural order can only be drawn from that order and not from rational psychology as an independent moment of intellectual intuition. The divine light exists indeed in a remote sense, though not as ideas immediately instrumental in analytic thought. Man's active intellect, operating according to the conditions of abstraction, is sufficient to explain how the intellect knows.

The basis of formal certitude rests in the reflexive act of the soul, the 'reflection of the intellect on its own act.' It is on this level and through this mode that the intellect grounds the syntax of logic respecting both complex and incomplex modes of reason. Logic is a discipline dealing with rational entities knowable apart from things of nature, and hence the logician does not have to know all sciences before he can formulate the modes of logic. Logic asserts forms of discourse, but the natural sciences use the forms to make assertions about things existing in the natural order. Accordingly, the logician unversed in biology, for example, will not know the natural entities of biology, yet he will know the incomplex and complex discursive modes by means of which things biological are formulable.

This presents two aspects: 1. The reflexive analysis of modes of thought, and 2. Natural entities existing independently of the knowing intellect. God did not create man and leave man to create the inferior beings in the order of creation. Logic is then presupposed for science, but in addition the propositions of natural science are about univocal signs of many. This latter relationship must be conditioned by the thing if there is to be an adequation between the sign and the thing signated based on some other principle than the power of the mind to formulate arbitrary associations.

St. Thomas agrees with Aristotle that it is absurd to seek knowledge and simultaneously the means for obtaining knowledge.² But now it is a basic postulate in Aristotelian analysis that propositions break up into their terms. Such terms are not logical atoms without intentional structure, but signs which signify substances and thus such signs belong to the level of intentions or *modes of signification*. It is then the right, good and noble thing that the *De Ente et Essentia* should invoke the investigation of being and essence by reference to intention. Modes of signification have a similitude or formal analogy to the modes of being in natures, and the intellect is said to know, that is, to understand the thing when it has abstracted the similitude of its being inasmuch as it is a substantial unity.

Logic deals with *entia rationis*, beings of the conceptual order. But the *res naturae*, the thing as individuated, is independent of the rational order. Essence exists one way in things, but in another way in the mind. Rational essence is composed of signs which stand to the thing signated (the nature), and hence the rational essence is by composition and division, but the nature of the thing exists as indivisibly individuated. The divisibility and separation is in the order of abstraction or analysis and not literally in the thing in this mode. When one measures, for example, a table he does not divide and compose the table, but the act of analysis runs thus: a unit (imposed) of the table is to its total length as one is to (say) twelve.³ The predicables

² Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, i, 995 a 12.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *In II Met.*, i. 5.

³ A few Aristotelian sources may be helpful: In regard to unified wholes: "...those which are so (*scil.* wholes) by nature are wholes in a higher degree than those which are so by art (*scil.* fabrication), as we said in the case of unity also, wholeness being in fact a sort of oneness." *Met.* 1023 b 33 "Now most things are called one because they either do or have or suffer or are related to something else that is one, but the things that are primarily called one are those whose substance is one,—and one either in continuity or in form or in definition.... While in a

are modes for composing and dividing essence, which represent significantly the finite or limited whole or the thing of nature. Thus an essence is like a set of ratios, or proportion, for the signs refer to each other and in addition to *that which* is signated. It is clear that in the rational order signification possesses an *analytic remotion* or formal distance from that which is signified.

Let, therefore, two orders of reference be posed: 1. The horizontal order of reference according to which *entia rationis*, beings of the conceptual order, refer to each other. These are second intentions in the order of signification and consist of the

sense we call anything one if it is a quantity and continuous, in a sense we do not unless it is a whole, i. e. unless it has unity of form." Met. 1016 b 7. In regard to the analytic separability of the essence: "...and the physicist is concerned only with things whose forms are separable indeed, but do not exist apart from matter.... The mode of existence and essence of the separable it is the business of the primary type of philosophy to define." Physics, 194 b 12. "The underlying nature is an object of scientific knowledge by an analogy." Physics, 191 a 8. "...and when I speak of substance without matter I mean essence." 1032 b 14. "It is obvious then, ... what sensible substance is and how it exists—one kind of it as matter, another as form or actuality, while the third kind is that which is composed of these two." 1043 a 26. "...for in everything the essence is identical with the ground of its being." De Anima, 415 b 12. "...form or essence, which is that precisely in virtue of which a thing is called a 'this'..." De Anima, 412 a 8. In regard to essence, nature and substance: "From what has been said, then, it is plain that nature in the primary and strict sense is the essence of things which have in themselves, as such, a source of movement; for the matter is called the nature because it is qualified to receive this, and processes of becoming and growing are called nature because they are movements proceeding from this." Met. 1015 a 13. "The kinds of essential being are precisely those that are indicated by the figures of predication (*scil.* the categories); for the senses of 'being' are just as many as these figures." Met. 1017 a 23. "Therefore there is an essence only of those things whose formula is a definition." Met. 1030 a 6. See further Met. Z. "It follows then, that 'substance' has two senses: (A) the ultimate substratum, which is no longer predicated of anything else, and (B) that which, being a 'this' is also separable..." Met. 1017 b 23. Oxford University Press Ed.

predicables: genus, species, difference, property, and accident. As such they are terms of discourse. In combination these make up a network of rationality by which *entia naturae*, beings of nature, are caught and expressed in the order of universals as univocal signs of many. Logic, strictly speaking, is the abstraction and reflexive scrutiny of these modes of signification or terms of discourse. The second intention is the formal counterpart or analogue of a nature, an analytic composite which supplies the focus of analysis for synthetic natures. It is *that by virtue of which what* is known (the nature) is known. 2. In addition to the horizontal reference there is a vertical reference to the first intention which is an act of the mind signifying things themselves which are not signs of other things. Science deals with first intentions, but logic deals with second intentions. Herein lies the problem of the adequation or commensuration of the intellect to the thing.

Platonism is content to know the order of *entia rationis*, beings of the conceptual order, the ratios and sets of ratios, of formal reference in the horizontal plane. How these refer to *entia naturae*, beings of nature, namely, the individuated or terminated substance in nature remains a mystery. Platonism, then, stops short of the concrete universal or principle and is content to exploit the formal connectives of discourse at the expense of the terms connected. The Pythagorean reification of numbers, namely, that numbers *are* things, persists in the tradition. Hence it is that Platonism studies mind as efficient cause primarily expressed in formal intuitions which furnish the elements of structural forms. But the individuating cause in nature it fails to render intelligible. That anything is received into another thing according to the mode of the recipient remains inexplicable, but in Aristotelian abstraction the mode of the recipient is the crux of the doctrine.

Abstraction explains the mode of reciprocity in the order of

knowing, since indeed this mode in the abstractive order is the analogue of the mode of reciprocity in the natural order. The passage from matter and form to potency and act is by way of analogy, but it should be noted that although all cases of matter and form are cases of potency and act not all cases of potency and act are cases of matter and form. In addition it is by the mode of reciprocity in the order of abstraction that the thing is continuous with the sensible species and the sensible species with the intelligible species.⁴ But this remains to be explained in the following section.

2

The Order of Abstraction and the Order of Signification

To refer to man as a little higher than the brutes and a little lower than the angels is a familiar figure of literature, and implies that man has a relative position in the order of creation which is somehow measurable. Perhaps it is from this source that the term *value* in ethics originated, for values are certainly assignable to functions of measurement. At any rate the figure of speech may be unequivocally traced to the scholastic scheme of anthropology wherein man's good is intimately associated with his created mode of being in the continuity of the divine order. It is a principle of scholasticism that each creature

⁴ "The 'originative sources', then, of the things which come-to-be are equal in number to, and identical in kind with, those in the sphere of the eternal and primary things. For there is *one* in the sense of 'matter', and a *second* in the sense of 'form': and, in addition, the *third* 'originative source' must be present as well. For the two first are not sufficient to bring things into being, any more than they are adequate to account for the primary things." "But the third 'originative source' must be present as well—the cause vaguely dreamed of by all our predecessors, definitely stated by none of them." Aristotle, *De Gen. et Corrup.*, 335 a 27 and 335 b 8. Oxford University Press Ed.

exists by its proper or differentiating act which is also its proper measure of perfection as derived from God, the First and Pure Act. There is then a continuous order of creation from God, the First Act and Origin, through the hierarchy of angels, through man, animals, and vegetables to things inanimate.

The human soul which is last in the order of intelligences is first in the order of material forms. It is differentiated from corporeal bodies *qua* corporeal by its proper act, namely, the mode of knowing which results from its assigned measure of being or perfection. Inanimate things in their own order receive their act from a principle exterior to them, whereas though the soul is in an order of being received from God it has yet an intrinsic principle of operation. It belongs to the order of the living or animate which moves itself by a proper economy of operations intrinsic to itself. On the other hand the forms of elements which are at the greatest distance from the divine act and in the greatest propinquity to matter have no operations which exceed active and passive capacities, such as rarefaction and condensation, etc.—simple dispositions of matter. Quantity, or the relative expansiveness of a body, is a fundamental attribute, the first accident, of corporeal substances. It is a function of primary matter, as the reduction of its multiple elements to substantial unity is a function of its limiting or finite form as actuated in its operation.

Elements are ordered to each other according to act and potency, and indeed actuality and potentiality are present in all the categories, but not apart from the manner in which the categories are accidents of substance. A mere aggregate or collection of elements cannot be so compounded as to form a real unity unless the elements be so necessarily ordered to each other as to possess unity in potency before it is possessed in act. It

follows, therefore, that causes essentially ordered are causes hierarchically and necessarily ordered, so that if discontinuity of being is apparent there is nevertheless continuity of order. Accordingly, elements, whether simple or complex, which can combine so as to constitute a substantial unity do so through a necessary disposition which they have to each other, namely, the determinable capacity of one to receive the determinate and hence determining act of the other.

The act of anything to the potency of something can be understood, as indeed conceived by Aristotle and following him St. Thomas, as the order of a continuous proportion, the ratios of which are terminated in the correlatives of act and potency as in anything to something. Things which differ and yet are disposed as act to potency are mediated into one thing by the assimilation of the act to the potency. If one thing is continuous with another the inner bounds have yet a term in common, as for instance in this continuous proportion: $2 : 4 :: 4 : 8 :: 8 : 16 :: \text{etc.} \dots$

The order of continuous proportion is the analogical principle according to which God distributes His justice, or merits and awards. But the essence or nature of each created thing, that is, the delimited and limiting mode of its production, is the proper act of creation assigned to the thing causing it to be what it is and differentiating it as a such from other modes. Accordingly, an immediately superior thing in the continuous order of creation has yet a term in common with its immediately inferior thing, and by this they stand to each other as a conatus of act and potency. It must be remembered, however, that if two such things have a term in common and are alike in a certain respect they yet are unlike in a certain other respect according to the proper act of each. Thus the proper act of a corporeal body *qua* corporeal is to be such a relative multiple of three dimensions, while the proper act of an

animate body is to be alive, and of an intelligence to be intellectual so that one perfection is united to another.

From what has been said an introduction is given to the meaning of the principle that anything is received into another according to the mode of the recipient. And by the continuous proportion of any two things to each other as limited by form, terminated by matter and actualized by an efficient cause, an operation as proper or contingent, it can be seen what act and potency are. Things which are in immediate ratio as continuous proportion are said to be connatural with each other, and this is the basis upon which a substance has one perfection and in addition another perfection. If the problem of duality is of moment it should be observed how it is present in one mode but not in another, because the duality of two terms is as act to potency as one middle term in a continuous proportion is to the other. Hence there is not a duality of two independent substances in the Cartesian manner, as of mind and extension, but a duality of interdependent terms within the continuity of operation. The grade of a created being is measured by the simplicity or diversity of its powers of operation inasmuch as these are actualized. One created being is superior to another, and hence excels or is more noble, in the measure in which its powers of operation are simpler, that is, approach reduction to a power one and numerically the same. It appears, therefore, that according to man's finite vision classification cuts across the continuity of God's creative act according to the diversity or simplicity of powers by which a thing has its act. In Aristotle is contained the concept of autonomy which is notwithstanding in subordination, a principle so important to St. Thomas in refuting pantheistic influences in scholastic theology. The nature of a thing is the first principle of its operation for the performance of which the thing has come into being, or in general the operation which anything is adapted to perform. But

essence is *that by virtue of which* a thing is what it is necessarily and primarily as intelligible, or in general that in virtue of which it is constituted in a determinate degree of primarily intelligible being. The one stands to the other as the links of a chain.

Now that man has been given a situs in the network of creation it is possible to examine him as a substance composited of matter and form and yet constituting a substantial unity. This can best be conducted by an analysis of the order of abstraction in the process of coming to know.

The soul is the actuality of an organic body possessing the power of life, wherein it is to be understood that the body is a corporeal substance as an organic unity or whole consisting of an organization of parts or functions. Life is the power of self-movement exercised by virtue of itself, yet only inasmuch as an organic body is such a grade of being in the divine order of creation. To be alive and to be an organization of functions by virtue of the act of living is the proper operation of an organic body.

As the body alone is not a substance so also the soul alone is not a substance, for the animated body is not an accretion but a concretion, being a composite of matter and form unified by its proper operation. Because of this the separation of soul and body is to be understood in two modes: 1. Literally, as the corruption of a corporeal body to which the soul is; 2. Figuratively, as a mode of diction, in that by analysis the soul is distinguished from the body.

An organic body possesses potentialities which are both active and passive. The actuality of an active power is an activity or an efficient cause *per se* operable, whereas the actuality of a passive power is the condition of change by an extrinsic agent. Active potency is a power to operate, but, on the contrary, passive potency is a power to receive; and potency is relative

to the act and for the sake of the act. Moreover a passive potency is not a non-active potency, but a potency which is passive before being operative, namely, one that must be informed by something other than itself before being in act. A passive potency is a mean term in a segment of change, as for instance the term b in the proportion $a : b :: b : c$; for act and potency being continuous must have a term in common and yet a difference. From what has been said it follows that every body has a constitutive principle by virtue of which it is that which it is and performs that which it performs. This is its proper perfection, since each creature exists by its proper act and perfection. Accordingly, an actual organic body is a corporeal substance, the organized parts of which are its matter, possessing powers, and the soul of which is the form, the actuality of the aforesaid powers.

The soul as such is the actuality of both the passive and active powers of the organic body. It is a principle of cognition that powers are known from their acts as the potentialities of a substance are known from its operations. In respect to the soul the suppositum or subject of operation is the composite of body and soul, that is to say, the primary and efficient act by virtue of which soul and body constitute a substantial unity rather than an accidental association. The whole man in action is the subject of analysis as opposed to any restricted aspect of him.

A vegetative soul consists in the reduction of the operations of nutrition, growth and reproduction to unity. An animal, being one grade removed in excellence, has a soul which is a unity of the vegetative operations and in addition that other perfection which supervenes to it, namely, the operations of sensation, locomotion and appetite or desire (the affective impulses). The soul of a man is a reduction to unity of the vegetative and sensitive operations and another perfection

which supervenes to him and is the operation of intellect. It is a basic principle that one nature possesses a greater perfection over another according to its greater simplicity of operation, that is, according to the measure in which it reduces manifold operations to a few unified operations. Simultaneously, this is its mode of being and good or measure of excellence (excelling) in the created order of substances. Man actualizes his perfections in the measure in which he actualizes his proper powers, but especially the operation of intellection. It is this operation which constitutes his proper difference and sets him apart in the genus animal.

In the order of becoming human powers are compendent thus: vegetative, sensitive, appetitive, locomotive, and intellectual. Man vegetates, desires (seeks or avoids), moves and understands. Sense depends on vegetation, intellect upon sense, and desire upon either sense or intellect. Man seeks or avoids images and ideas. But the proper act of intellect consists in seeking ideas, namely, universals. Motions follow as an exploitation of what is desired.

The powers of man as man issue from his substance as accidents of his nature. Sense is a passive power and that by which man is in potency to sensibles, since sensible things are the agents of this power and related to it as the efficient cause of its becoming actual. Sensible things, corporeal substances or natures outside of the body, are in act apart from the senses. Thus it is that sensible things in act possess an active agency with respect to the senses, seeing that they are potentially efficient causes of sensation. The passive potency or reciprocity of the senses is brought into act by virtue of the operations of sensibles.

The sensible in act is identical with the sense in act in the manner that b is a common term in the proportion $a : b :: b : c$. Since the passive matter of the sense organ can be differentiated

by the active agency of the sensible thing, the sense organ is the material cause of sensation, for that which can be differentiated is matter or like matter. Sensation is the actualization of this passive potency, consequently it follows that the sensible nature as actually sensed is one and the same with the sense actualized by assimilation.

In general the senses are all things as sensed since they are in potentiality to all sensible things. But it should be observed that although the senses are assimilated to the sensible thing as actual, still the distinction must be made that the sensation, being the actualized sensible in the actualized sense, is something other than the matter of the sensible nature. Sensations are *entia sensus*, beings of sense, or *entia sensus et imaginationis*, beings of sense and imagination. The sensory similitude (phantasm) is abstracted from the matter of the sensible thing, but it is still expressive of the material conditions of the sensible thing as individuated in this or that nature although it is received according to the mode of the recipient. Since the subject of sensitive knowledge is always a singular, an individuated nature *extra mentem*, namely, a corporeal substance, corporeal substances belong to the literal order of independent existences so that sensitive knowledge gives the ground of the first intention. This is the first figure of remotion, when the order of signation is taken as the reverse of the order of abstraction, and stands for the thing under its first abstraction and yet as it is immediately in its individuation.

Sensations stand for natural things immediately as actualized in sense, that is to say, the bringing into act of the potency of the sense. The senses, however, are not reflexive and do not know themselves as powers or acts. In the reverse order of signation, the sensation is not *that which* is known but *that by means of which* the sensible is known. What is known of an individual corporeal thing is its individuated nature sepa-

rated from the matter of the substance, but retaining the conditions of individuality. Accordingly, the sensation is not significant as a physiological event but as a potential sign.

The intellect is both an active and a passive power. Of these the passive or possible intellect is in potentiality to all intelligible things, and the active intellect is the efficient cause of the transmission into actuality of the potencies of the passive intellect. It is the passive intellect which is in potentiality to all sensible species, but things are not actually intelligible apart from the act of intellection. For example, corporeal substances are actually sensible but only potentially intelligible, so that they are actually intelligible only as actually understood. Consequently, it follows that intelligible things are not the efficient cause of the actualization of the passive intellect. Since, as Aristotle asserts in the *De Anima* and following him St. Thomas, the object of knowing and the act of knowing are one and the same, the intelligible in act is the intellect in act. The actualization of the potential intelligibility of a thing is the same as the actualization of the passive intellect. It should be understood that the actual intellect is whatever it actually understands.

Although the intelligible thing in potency is different from the passive intellect in potency, nevertheless as actualized they are assimilated. The first operation of the active intellect is abstraction, and abstraction is the primary reduction of the passive intellect from potentiality to act, or in general the reduction of potentially intelligible things to things understood.

Material things, as has been said, are actually sensible but not actually intelligible, inasmuch as their forms are individuated by material ingredients. Only by abstraction are they actually intelligible, and it may be said that things are actually intelligible in the measure in which they are abstracted from matter. Abstraction is the power of the active intellect to exclude in-

dividuating conditions. But so far as the matter of knowledge is concerned intellect is absolutely dependent upon the senses. Natures exist as modes of accidents in corporeal substances, whereas essences exist as the modes of accident in the intellect; but as has been seen, essence is continuously conditioned by the nature so that the essence as abstracted is what the thing is in its proper and necessary mode apart from all contingent increments. The thing is *that which* is understood *by means* of the essence.

Essences, being *entia rationis* or beings of reason, are *that by virtue of which* the intellect understands natures inasmuch as they are natures, namely, as such a necessary being freed from all improper accidents. Sensitive knowledge is the material cause of intellective knowledge and leads to the quiddity of the thing, that is, the formal equivalent of the thing according as it is that kind of thing and not another.

The order of signification is the converse of the order of abstraction, but presupposes it. Abstraction is ordered thus: knowledge of singulars by sense precedes knowledge of the universal by intellect. First genera are abstracted and then species. Species are differentiated by a distinction of proper operation in the thing, just as animal is vital but man is rational. The genus is to the species as matter is to the form, since the species are differentiated from the genus by a proper distinction of act.

Whereas the senses are not reflexive, not knowing their own acts, the intellect is reflexive and does know its own acts, powers and abstractions. The intellect knows that it is a substance through its accidents, and furthermore it knows what it is actually by the condition that the object of thought and the act of thought are one and the same. Hence it is that the intellect infers from its accidents to its substance. The concepts of logic are abstractions from *entia rationis*, beings of reason,

as such, whereas the concepts of metaphysics are abstractions from common intelligible matter and regulate the accord of concepts of reason to the modes of things according as being, one, true and good are present to the thing and the essence. Logic is a means between nature and metaphysics and only when so understood does it preserve its proper limitation and significance.

Nature is an order of individuated things in which such things come to be and perish by a multiplication of formal act in matter consistent with the principle of one and many in material process. Substances are in nature *simpliciter*. But man in his finite and discursive capacity knows by virtue of analysis and only reaches synthesis after laborious efforts and even then only imperfectly. Man must know by division and composition or specially conditioned qualifying operations. The order of knowing is grounded in the order of existence through the continuity of abstraction, though the intellect must understand by means of its reflexive powers.

The categories deal with the advention of accidents in substance, corporeal substances which are delimited and hence limiting wholes. Hermann Weyl observes on page one, 30, of his *Philosophie der Mathematik und Wissenschaft*: "Auch die Aristotelische Logik war im wesentlichen abstrahiert aus der Mathematik"; and he might have observed that a natural substance is like a finite magnitude or whole, though not necessarily quantitative as such. Genus, species, difference, property, and accident, the predicables, are fabrications of the intellect, but as analytic similitudes or analogues of substance they indicate discursively the necessary mode of a substance or the relative limitation of categoric accidents. A limited whole in the order of nature can be brought into commensuration with a limited whole in the order of reason, and thus Aristotle, and after him St. Thomas, affirm that nature divides readily into

genera and species. The nature is *that which* is known, whereas the essence is *that by virtue of which* it is known.

Matter is to form as genus is to species, from which it is to be understood that as matter is that which is differentiated by formal act in the natural order, so genus is that which is differentiated by the intellectual act in the rational order. And indeed it is important that the analytic remotion entailed should be guarded and preserved if a confusion of domains of reference is to be avoided. Species are explicitly differentiated by the active intellect assigning the proper act of the thing constituting the species as such a kind. This it does respecting the sensible species actualized in the senses by the active agency of the thing. Specific unity expresses the formal similitude of a universal as an univocal sign of many as referred from a secondary substance (analytic order of reason) to multiple primary substances (order of independent natures) which are individuals of a like species. Since the delimiting and hence limiting act of the primary substance determines it to be what it is, the form is in its way the cause of specific unity. Numerical unity expresses the discrete oneness of the multiple individuals constituted according to similar specific acts. It thus expresses the generality of distinction and the material multiplicity of primary substances having the same secondary substance. It should be carefully noted that numerical unity, far from excluding specific unity, presupposes it actualized in the individual in the sense that the unity or indivision of the nature (primary operation by virtue of which a thing is what it is), the principle of specific unity, is of necessity antecedent to a substance being numerically one. The universal is a common sign of many, but it is such through the similarity of the act by which each of the many have specific unity as a precondition of their oneness with respect to multiplicity. Nor does the universal which refers to natures have an existence over and

beyond the natures as the Platonists are accustomed to contend.

Matter is the principle of the many in the order of natures or primary substances, seeing that it is the principle according to which the proper specific act is multiplied into a multiplicity of individuals after the kind of the species. Genus, then, is the first qualification of substance as a something potential to differentiation, whereas species issue from the first actuality of difference by means of the proper operation. The similitude of the differentiating act in a certain multiplicity of natures is the ground of genus, while the differentiating operation itself as actualized is the ground of the specific individual. Multiple units are the natural sum of individuated natures, and thus the statement that universals are univocal signs of many is to be understood as a cross reference of signs in the universal mode, since the universal expresses unity and community. The soul abstracts the intention from many particulars and apprehends that they bear a ratio of similitude to one another in respect of act, but it apprehends in addition that they are one and discrete because the specific act of the being of each renders each a one numerically distinct from the others. It should be observed, however, that the universal is not based on an enumeration since one instance suffices for the apprehension of the proper act by which the nature is necessarily what it is. "It appears that it is universal according to act properly speaking, since an intention is abstracted from many, considered as one and the same in principle by means of judgment according as it is abstracted from many, yet plurified according to the being which it has in them."⁵ What the metaphysician discusses in terms of the potentiality and actuality of the thing the logician formulates as an intention.

An accidental accident as opposed to a proper accident is an

⁵ *De Universalibus*, attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas.

increment which may or may not accrue in addition to the proper accident of a substance. It is derived from the material or contingent aspect of the matter as a margin of potency. A property, however, is a sort of secondary proper act, just as in man the property of risibility is an act issuing from an apprehension within the intellect. Whereas properties issue from the proper accidents, contingent accidents do not. Contingent accidents may form descriptions, but they cannot signify what a thing is primarily as a nature or mode of substantial unity of this or that grade of perfection.

The first intention is a sensation actualized in the potency of sense by the active agency of the sensible body; consequently, it is a sensible substitute of the thing, but to be understood as the substitute of the thing as it is and not as a sign referring to other things. As such it is a potential sign in the order of abstraction. Such intentions are the implicit subject matter of natural science. The second intention, or that by virtue of which what is known is known, is the analogue of the first intention as it is rendered intelligible by the intellect in act, and thus as existing as the essence of the sensible thing freed from all contingent increments of individuation. Further, it is the thing as ultimately analyzed by reflexive intellectual acts whereby what is generically implicit in first intentions, and hence in like things, becomes discursively explicit, namely, according to signation by genus, species, difference, property and accident.

Since the intellectured essence expresses the necessary mode of being whereby the thing must be what it is, and hence distinguishes the basis of generic similitude through specific act, individual difference (the basis of numerical multiplication of the individuals in quantified matter after the kind of a species) must ensue from a condition in addition to the essential mode of being. This condition ensues from accidents which advene

to the nature of the thing in a marginal aspect, but these accidents are not necessary acts of the natural thing, that is to say, not that by virtue of which the thing is formally what it is, and hence they do not ensue from the specific operation as such. *Materia signata* (or a determinacy ensuing from a grade of being in matter, which a given substance has prior to the supervention of a further perfection) is the basis of numerical distinctions. It follows from this that though the specific unity of the individual makes it numerically one as such a kind of species, still individuals differ from each other as things of the same species by accidental factors derived from matter and not from the proper form. These signated material factors are increments outside of the formal operation by virtue of which a nature primarily exists and is intelligible. It may be said that although the thing is and is intelligible essentially by virtue of its proper operation, still matter as determined by active and passive qualities, such as rarefaction and condensation (simple dispositions of matter in excess of pure potentiality in the order of substance), has a certain determined character prior to the supervention of another perfection. Hence it is that the distinctions of *materia signata* ensue from material dispositions and not from essential form or proper act. An inferior mode of being stands as matter to a superior mode of being, and can be assimilated to the superior whereby it individuates the superior mode. It is for this reason among others that there is not one common or generic soul of all men, but each man has an individual soul peculiar to himself.

But the individual is not another predicable as some thought, for this would be an equivocation between the natural order and the rational order. The first intention is the singular sign of the sensible thing as assimilated in sense, and therefore of the individuated thing; consequently, it is the potential sign *by virtue of which* the nature (that which exists) is known,

but it is actually so known as a second intention in the active intellect and thus as freed from all improper accidents. The second intention is *that by virtue of which* the thing (that which exists) is known in its primary actuality, and hence as a necessary mode of essence.

The categories deal with inherence on the basis of substance as the primary mode of being. They relate to qualified aspects of natures and are analytically formulable by means of the delimiting predicables as modes of substantial being. It should be observed that although there are as many kinds of being as there are kinds of predicaments (categories), yet all the secondary categories reduce their qualifications to substance. Substance is not a mode of inherence, but if it sometimes seems so it is according to the manner in which second intentions (secondary substances) stand to first intentions which are assimilated from natures by the senses. Thus it is that genus is to species as matter is to form, since informed matter is the divisible in nature, whereas informed genus is that which is divisible in thought.

Relations or the order of one thing to another express the mode in which act stands to potency as correlative opposites, and hence the order in which one thing is assimilated to another. It has been suggested by the figure of continuous proportion that in its necessary aspect this represents a compendent alteration in a relative magnitude or delimited whole with unity of formal act. Relations are grounded in the mode in which a modifies b, b is modified by a, or the mode in which a and b modify each other. The intellect reflecting on itself may abstract these relations and consider them under the rubric of typical properties, such as reflexiveness, asymmetry, symmetry, transitiveness, etc.; but relations reduce to their terms, namely, substances. Relations do not possess a being over and above their natural concretion in things.

Where the proper accidents are unknown, and hence the essential form remains undetermined, the mode of assertion is by way of accidental accidents. In such cases the necessary mode of being is indeterminate in analysis due to the obscurity of natural processes. Under such circumstances the compossibility of essence to existence is not established, and the transcendental predicates cannot be conveniently measured in the adequation of the thing to the intellect. Such modes are rather like protocols of arbitrary aggregates or confused first intentions awaiting admission by some knack of theory and experiment to the certified status of an essence. The necessary accidents are those without which the subject cannot exist, whereas the contingent accidents may or may not be present without affecting the essential mode of substantial being. Contingent accidents therefore result in accidental units,—the essential order of act to potency is unknown. In general, then, properties derived from the essence issue from the constitutive principle of the natural being, or the necessarily disposed order of act and potency, but the contingent aspects are derived from certain particular dispositions of the matter as a margin of potentiality beyond the essential form. Where the essence is known the contingent accidents may be considered as completions of individuality extrinsically received, and where it is not known they are not univocal signs of many.

And now a word about angels. Angels are beings not literally knowable to man as corporeal substances are knowable, and hence they must be understood by analogy. They are like material natures according as such natures have an essence, but they are unlike such natures in that corporeal natures are composed of matter and form. But it has been said that all cases of matter and form are instances of potency and act, and that this is not simply convertible. The angels have potency and act without having matter and form. They possess essence and

existence, and the angelic essence is its existence, so that consequently there is not a material distinction of *that which* and *that by virtue of which* respecting their being. An angel is simultaneously all that it can be without any margin of material potentiality. Unlike man, an angel does not approach its essence discursively or by successive operations.

The perfection of an angel follows immediately from its grade of being, which is its grade of knowing. An angel understands by a single intuition or immediate illumination. Its potency arises from the fact that its being is not *a se*, but derived from God as such a mode of perfection or measure of being in act in the order of creation. The Cartesian postulate for substance: *res quae ita existit ut nulla alia re indigeat ad existendum*,⁶ will not suffice to define substance clearly in the finite order since it omits the ordination of the finite to that which conditions it in its order. Accordingly, if an angel exists *per se* and *in se* it does so as a certain autonomy of completed act received from God, and it is a simultaneously actualized measure of act. But it is a finite measure, so that accordingly its potentiality may be understood since, though it is such a measure of act, the measure is apart from the pure act which is God. A partial measure is not equivalent to the whole.

Since an angel is without any admixture of matter, standing as it does at a fixed distance or remotion from matter, its species cannot be multiplied into many according to the quantifying principle of matter. The specific act of the angel is one and the same with its existence and inseparable therefrom, so that it is a species one and distinct. There is then not a multiplication of individuals after the kind of a species, but it can be said that there is more than one angel, since a species is determined by the addition of a unit as indeed one number is differentiated

⁶ "A thing which exists in such a way that it requires no other in order to exist." Descartes. *Principia Philosophiae*. i. 51.

from another by the addition of a unit. Thus one angel differs from another by the addition of an operation. In addition, a being differs from another being according as in one being there is a reduction of multiple operations to a few unified operations, the being with greater operative unity excelling in measure of perfection the being with less. Any being possesses a constitutive principle by virtue of which it is that which it is and performs that which it performs—its proper perfection. Each creature exists by its assigned act and proper perfection. The more an active and operative power is elevated in dignity, the more noble it is, the more power it includes and compounds in itself. Angels are such magnitudes of power completely actualized. "*Ordo rerum talis esse invenitur ut ab uno extremo ad alterum non perveniatur nisi per media.*"⁷



The Latin text of the *De Ente et Essentia* used for this translation is the critical edition of M.-D. Rolland-Gosselin, O. P., LE "DE ENTE ET ESSENTIA" de S. Thomas d'Aquin (Texte établi d'après les manuscrits parisiens.), Bibliothèque Thomiste VIII, Le Saulchoir, Kain, Belgique, 1926. This edition, which includes an introduction, notes and historical comments, is fully authenticated and corrected.

Footnotes have been confined to the citation of the text locus when an author or quotation appears in the translation. References: Aristotle, any standard text, but preferably in Greek or Latin; Avicenna, *Opera* . . . per canonicos (S. Augustini) emendata, Venise 1508; Averroes, *Aristotelis* . . . *Opera* . . . Averrois Cordubensis in ea opera . . . comentarii, Venetiis, in 4, T. I., 1552 et seq.; Boethius, M. S. *Boetii Opera Omnia*, T. 2. Migne

⁷ Further concerning the Angelology, cf. *Summa Theologica* and the *Summa Contra Gentes*. (English trans. by the Dominican Fathers, London, Burns, Oates & Washbourne Ltd.; Benziger Bros., New York.)

P. L., t. 182. M. Grabmann, Étienne Gilson and P. Mandonnet belong to the 'star chamber' of modern critics and commentators. For the beginner, who may find the text slightly obdurate, I recommend: *An Introduction to Philosophy*, by Jacques Maritain, Sheed and Ward, 1933. Because of the parallel doctrine, not to speak of its excellent conception, I also mention: *The Logic of William of Ockham*, Ernest Moody, Sheed and Ward, 1935.

According to Dante in *The Convivio* Latin is a conventional language, especially designed for stability and catholicity in order to reduce the confusion of the Tower of Babel. The vulgar tongue follows fluid usage, but the Latin follows premeditated art. This places a special charge upon the translator. The *De Ente* is an argument in the strictest sense. Its object is to demonstrate propositions and to invoke concepts. One may expect the restrained severity of demonstration, the repetitive convention of basic propositions as in a geometrical proof, and finally the cumulative persuasion of expanded meaning resulting from ordered syllogisms. In such expositions stylish word variations, pleonasms, and in short the whole apparatus by which modish writers puff the contours of their writings obscure the clarity and integrity of principles. Accordingly, the translator has confined paraphrase to the preface and has sought to adhere to the precise meaning of the text and thus to render a metaphrase even at the expense of awkward expression.

In general the Latinity of St. Thomas, inherited from Cicero and Boethius, passes with a just retention of meaning into English. I have rendered all of the technical terms by English equivalents, thus avoiding a certain esoteric manner of translators which makes for obscurantism, since not the words as such, but the concepts promoted by the context, "the discourse within the soul", are the proper vehicles of intelligence. In sundry places where the word *ratio* appears, it has been trans-

lated ratio rather than by some accredited English term, as, for example: notion, concept, idea, rationale, principle, etc. The ratio of genus, species and difference is in effect a reference in intentions; nor would one speak of the notion, rationale, etc. of 2 : 4. An essence in one sense may be compared to a set of ratios and thus like an equation in mathematics has a typical form.

The rough draft of this translation was first made for my own use in 1934-1935 during my academic year at Yale University as the Sterling Fellow in philosophy; consequently, I wish to acknowledge the opportunity which the fellowship afforded me. To Dr. Lewis M. Hammond, with whom the translation of the first part of the *opusculum* was begun, I owe a debt of initiation. For her assistance throughout with the burden of translation, and especially for her precise insights as to modes of rendition, a special measure of appreciation is due to my wife. Professor Scott Buchanan has contributed much to my appreciation of Greek and Scholastic methods, but I should be pained to suppose that any errors of mine might be attributed to anyone except myself.

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CONCERNING BEING AND
ESSENCE

CONCERNING BEING AND ESSENCE

INTRODUCTION

BECAUSE a small error in the beginning is a great one in the end, according to the Philosopher in the first book of the *De Caelo et Mundo*,¹ and since being and essence are what are first conceived by the intellect, as Avicenna says in the first book of his *Metaphysics*,² therefore, lest error befall from ignorance of them (being and essence), in order to reveal their difficulty it should be said what is signified by the names being and essence, and how they are found in diverse things and how they are disposed with respect to (*se habeant ad*) logical intentions, namely, genus, species, and difference.

¹ Aristotle, *De Caelo et Mundo*, A, 271 b 8-13.

² Avicenna, *Metaphysics*, Tr. I, Cap. 6, f. 72 b A.

CHAPTER ONE

BECAUSE indeed we must receive knowledge of the simple from the composite and arrive at what is prior from what is posterior, in order that beginning with the less difficult instruction may be made more suitably, we should proceed from the meaning of being to the meaning of essence.

Therefore one should know, as the Philosopher says in the fifth of the *Metaphysics*,³ that being by itself (*ens per se*) is said to be taken in two modes: in the one mode, that it is divided into ten genera; in the other, that it signifies the truth of propositions. Moreover the difference between these is that in the second mode everything can be called being concerning which an affirmative proposition can be formed, even if it posits nothing in the thing (*in re*); by virtue of this mode privations and negations are likewise called beings, for we say that affirmation is the opposite of negation, and that blindness is in the eye. But in the first mode only what posits something in the thing can be called being; consequently, according to the first mode blindness and such are not beings. The name essence, therefore, is not taken from being in the second mode, for in this mode some things are said to have essence which have not being, as is evident in privations. But essence is taken from being only in the first mode; whence the Commentator says in the same place that ⁴ "being in the first mode is said to be what signifies the essence of the thing." And because, as has been said, being in this mode is divided into ten genera,

³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Δ, 1017 a 22-35; also *Met.*, E, b 17-35.

⁴ Averroes, *In Met. L.V.*, Comm. 14, f. 55 a 56.

it follows that essence signifies something common to all natures by which diverse beings are disposed in different genera and species, as for instance humanity is the essence of man and so for others. And because that by means of which the thing is constituted in its proper genus or species is that which is signified by the definition indicating what the thing is, hence it is that the name essence has been changed by philosophers into the name quiddity. And this is what the Philosopher frequently calls "*quod quid erat esse*,"⁵ that is, that by virtue of which a thing (anything) has to be what it is (something), (*τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι*). And indeed it is called form according as by means of form the certitude of any single thing is signified, as Avicenna remarks in the second part of his *Metaphysics*.⁶ This is called by another name, nature, accepting nature according to the first of the four modes assigned by Boethius in his book *De Duabus Naturis*,⁷ namely, according as nature is said to be all that which can be comprehended by the intellect in any mode whatsoever; for a thing is not intelligible except by virtue of its definition and essence. And thus also the Philosopher in the Fourth book of his *Metaphysics*⁸ says that every substance is a nature. But the name nature taken in this sense is seen to signify the essence of a thing inasmuch as it has a disposition (*ordinem*) towards an operation proper to the thing, since no thing is lacking in its proper operation. Indeed the name quiddity is taken from that which signifies the definition; but it is called essence according as by virtue of it and in it being has existence (*esse*).

But because being is asserted absolutely and primarily of

⁵ Aristotle, An. Post. I, 22, 82 b 38; De An. III, 6, 430 b 28; Met., Z, 1028 b 34.

⁶ Avicenna, perhaps Met. III, 5, f. 80 b; *certitudo*: essence.

⁷ Boethius, De Persona et Duabus Nat., c. I, PL, t. 64, col. 1341BC.

⁸ Aristotle, Metaphysics, Δ, 1014 b 35.

substances and secondarily and as if in a certain respect (*secundum quid*) of accidents, hence it is that essence also exists truly and properly in substances, but exists in accidents in a certain mode and in a certain respect. Some substances indeed are simple and others are composite, and in both there is an essence. But essence is possessed by simple substances in a truer and more noble mode according as simple substances have a more exalted existence, for they are the cause of those which are composite,—at least the primary substance, which is God, is. But since the essences of these substances are more concealed from us, therefore we must begin from the essences of composite substances in order that instruction may be made more suitably from what is easier.

CHAPTER TWO

IN COMPOSITE substances, therefore, matter and form are noted, as for instance in man soul and body are noted. Moreover it cannot be said that either of these alone is called essence. For it is evident that matter alone is not the essence of the thing, because it is by means of its essence that the thing is both known and ordered in its species and genus. But matter is not the principle of cognition, nor is anything determined as regards genus and species according to it (matter), but according to that by means of which something is in act. And furthermore neither can form alone be called the essence of composite substance, however much some attempt to assert this. From what has been said it is clear that essence is what is signified by the definition of the thing. But the definition of natural substances contains not only form but also matter; for otherwise natural definitions and mathematical definitions would not differ. Nor can it be said that matter is posited in the definition of a natural substance as an addition to its essence or as a being outside of its essence (*extra essentiam*), since this mode of definition is more proper to accidents which do not have a perfect essence; whence it follows that they must admit the subject into their definition, which (subject) is outside of their genus. It is clear, therefore, that essence comprehends matter and form. But it cannot be said that essence signifies a relation which is between matter and form, or that it is something superadded to them, since something superadded would of necessity be accidental or extraneous to the thing, nor could the thing be conceived by means of it, for everything is appro-

priate to its essence. For by the form, which is the actuality of matter, matter is made being in act and a this somewhat. Whence that which is superadded does not give existence (*esse*) in act simply to matter, but existence in act of such sort as likewise accidents make, as for instance whiteness makes something white in act. Wherefore whenever such form is acquired it is not said to be generated simply but in a certain respect (*secundum quid*). Hence it follows that in composite substances the name of essence signifies that which is composed of matter and form. And this agrees also with the opinion of Boethius in his commentary *Predicamentorum*,⁹ where he says that *ousia* signifies a composite. For *ousia* according to the Greeks is the same as essence according to us, as Boethius himself remarks in his book *De Duabus Naturis*.¹⁰ Avicenna also says¹¹ that the quiddity of composite substances is itself a composition of matter and form. The Commentator also says concerning the seventh book of the *Metaphysics*¹²: "The nature which species have in things capable of generation is something intermediate that is composed of matter and form." Reason also accords with this, because the existence of a composite substance is not the existence of form only, nor the existence of matter only, but of the composite itself; and indeed essence is that according to which a thing is said to exist. Whence it follows that the essence by virtue of which a thing is called being is not form alone, nor matter alone, but both; although in its mode the form is the cause of its existence. We discover it indeed thus in other things which are constituted from more than one principle, since a thing is not named from one of those principles alone, but from that which unites both.

⁹ In Cat. I, De Substantia, PL, t. 64, col. 184 A.

¹⁰ De Persona et Duabus, Nat., PL, t. 64, col. 1344 C. D.

¹¹ Avicenna, Met., V, 5, f. 90 a F.

¹² Averroes, In Met., VII, c. 7, comm. 27, f. 83 a 41.

It appears thus in the case of tastes, because sweetness is caused from the action of warmth dissolving moisture, and although in this mode the warmth is the cause of the sweetness, yet a body is not called sweet from its warmth but from the taste which unites both the warmth and the moisture.

But because the principle of individuation is matter, it perhaps seems to follow from this that essence which unites in itself both matter and form would be only particular and not universal. From this it would follow that universals do not have definition, if essence is what is signified by means of the definition. One should therefore understand that matter in any mode whatsoever is not taken to be the principle of individuation, but only signated matter (*materia signata*). And I call signated matter that which is considered as under determinate dimensions. But now this matter is not posited in the definition of man inasmuch as he is man, but it would be posited in the definition of Socrates if Socrates were to have a definition. But in the definition of man non-signated matter is posited; for in the definition of man this certain flesh and this certain bone are not posited, but bone and flesh absolutely, which are the non-signated matter of man. Accordingly, it is clear that the essence of Socrates and the essence of man do not differ except according to signate and non-signate. Whence the Commentator remarks upon the seventh of the *Metaphysics*¹⁸: "Socrates is nothing other than animality and rationality which are his quiddity." Thus also the essence of genus and of species differ according to signate and non-signate, although there is a different mode of designation for each of them, because the designation of the individual with respect to species is by means of matter determined by dimensions, whereas the designation of species in respect to genus is by means of the constitutive difference which is taken from the form of the thing.

¹⁸ Averroes, In Met., VII, 5, comm. 20, f. 80 a 23.

This determination or designation, however, which is in the species in respect to genus is not by means of something existing in the essence of species, which is in no mode in the essence of genus; nay, whatever is in species is in genus as something undetermined. For if animal is not the whole of man, but part of him, it is not predicated of him, since no integral part is predicated of its whole.

But how this is related can be seen if one observes how body differs according as animal is posited as part or as genus; for it cannot be genus in the same mode in which it is an integral part. This name body, therefore, is taken in several senses. For body according as it is in the genus of substance is asserted of that which has a nature such that three dimensions can be designated in it; in truth the three designated dimensions themselves are body which is in the genus of quantity. But it happens in things that what has one perfection may also aim at further perfection; as for instance is clear in the case of man, since he has both a sensitive nature and further, intellectual nature. Likewise indeed beyond this perfection which is to have such a form that three dimensions can be designated in it, another perfection can be added, as life or something of this sort. This name body, therefore, can signify a certain thing which has a form such that from it follows the possibility of designating three dimensions in it, with this limitation, namely, that from that form no further perfection may follow, but if anything else is added it is beyond the significance of body thus spoken of. And in this mode body is an integral and material part of animal, because thus soul will be beyond what is signified by the name body and will be something added to (excelling) body itself in such wise that from these two, that is, from soul and body, the animal is constituted as from its parts. This name body can also be taken so as to signify a certain thing which has a form such that from the form three

dimensions can be designated in it, whatsoever that form may be, and whether any further perfection can issue from it or not. And in this mode body is the genus of animal, because in animal nothing is taken which is not contained implicitly in body; for soul is not a form different from that by means of which three dimensions can be designated in that thing. And therefore when it was said that body is what has a form such that from the form three dimensions can be designated in the body, it was to be understood of whatever the form might be, whether animality or lapidity or any other. And so the form of animal is contained implicitly in the form of body, according as body is its genus. And such too is the habitude (relation) of animal to man. For if animal denoted only a certain thing which has a perfection such that it can feel and be moved by virtue of a principle existing in itself, to the exclusion of any further perfections, then whatever further perfection supervened to the thing, would be disposed in respect to (*haberet se ad*) animal by means of the partitive mode (*modum partis*) and not as if implicitly beneath (included in) the principle of animal, and thus animal would not be a genus. But animal is a genus according as it signifies a certain thing from the form of which can issue feeling and motion, whatsoever this form may be, whether it be the sensible soul alone or the sensible and rational together. Thus, therefore, genus signifies indeterminately all that which is in species, for it does not signify matter alone. Similarly, difference signifies the whole, but it does not signify form alone. And definition likewise signifies a whole, and also species does. But yet in diverse ways: because genus signifies a whole as a certain determination determining what is material in a thing, without the determination of the proper form. Whence genus is taken from matter, although it is not matter, as is evident in the instance of what is called body because it has a perfection such that three dimensions can be

designated in it, which certain perfection is materially disposed towards further perfection. In truth, on the contrary, difference is taken determinately as a certain determination by form, for the reason that determined matter is involved in the primary conception of it, as appears when it is called animate or that which has soul; for what it is, whether body or something else, is not determined. Whence Avicenna says¹⁴ that genus is not intellected in difference as a part of essence, but only as a being beyond its essence (*extra essentiam*), just as a subject is in regard to the intellection of the passions. And therefore, likewise, speaking *per se*, genus is not predicated concerning difference, as the Philosopher remarks in the third of the *Metaphysics*¹⁵ and the fourth of the *Topics*, unless perchance as a subject is predicated of passion. But definition or species comprehends both, namely, determinate matter which the name of genus designates, and determinate form which the name of difference designates.

And from this the reason is clear why genus and species and difference are proportionally disposed towards (*se habeant ad*) matter and form and the composite in nature, although they are not the same as nature, since genus is not matter but taken from matter as signifying the whole, nor is difference form but taken from form as signifying the whole. Wherefore we call man a rational animal, not from the composite of animal and rational, as we say that he is composed of body and soul; for man is said to be composed of soul and body, just as from two things a third thing is truly constituted, which is neither of the two; for man is neither soul nor body. But if man can be said to be composed in some manner of animal and rational, it is not as a third thing from two things but as a third concept from two concepts; for the concept of animal is one expressing,

¹⁴ Met., V, 6, f. 90 a BC.

¹⁵ Aristotle, Met., B, 998 b 24.

without the determination of a special form, the nature of a thing, by that which is material in respect to its ultimate perfection. The concept, however, of the difference rational consists in the determination of a special form. And from the two concepts (animal and rational) is constituted the concept of the species or definition. And therefore just as a thing constituted from other things does not take the predication of those things, thus neither does the concept take the predication of those concepts from which it is constituted, for we do not say that the definition is genus or difference.

But, although genus signifies the whole essence of species, yet it does not follow that there is one essence of different species which have the same genus, because the unity of the genus proceeds from its very indetermination and indifference; not, however, because that which is signified by genus is one nature by number in different species to which supervenes something else which is the difference determining it, as for instance form determines matter which is numerically one; but because genus signifies some form, though not determinately this or that (form) which difference expresses determinately, which is none other than that (form) which is signified indeterminately through genus. And therefore the Commentator says in the twelfth book of the *Metaphysics*¹⁶ that prime matter is called one through the remotion of all forms (*scil.* pure potentiality in the order of substance), but genus is called one through the community of its signified form. Whence it is clear that by means of the addition of difference, which removes the indetermination which was the cause of the unity of genus, species remain different by virtue of essence.

And because, as has been said, the nature of species is indeterminate in respect to the individual, just as the nature of

¹⁶ Averroes, In Met., XII, c. 14, f. 141 a 53 b 18.

genus is indeterminate with respect to species, hence it is that, just as that which is genus according as it is predicated concerning species implies in its signification, although indistinctly, all that is determinate in species, thus likewise it follows that what is species, according as it is predicated of the individual, signifies all that which is in the individual essentially although indistinctly. And in this mode the essence of Socrates is signified by the name of man, and as a consequence man is predicated of Socrates. But if the nature of the species be signified with the exclusion of designated matter, which is the principle of individuation, it will thus be disposed (*se habebit*) as a part (by means of the partitive mode). And in this mode it is signified by the name humanity, for humanity signifies that in virtue of which man is man. But designated matter is not that in virtue of which man is man; and, therefore, in no mode is it contained among those things from which man possesses manness. Since therefore humanity includes in its concept only those things from which man possesses manness, it is clear that designated matter is excluded from or cut off from its signification. And since the part is not predicated of the whole, hence it is that humanity is not predicated either of man or of Socrates. Wherefore Avicenna says¹⁷ that the quiddity of a composite is not the composite itself of which it is the quiddity, although the quiddity itself is composite; as for instance humanity, although it is composite, still is not man. Nay rather, it must be received in something which is designated matter. But since, as has been said, the designation of species in respect to genus is by virtue of form, whereas the designation of the individual in respect to species is by virtue of matter, it follows therefore that the name signifying that whence the nature of genus is taken, with the exclusion of the determinate form perfecting the species, should signify the

¹⁷ Avicenna, *Met.*, V, c. 5, f. 90 a F.

material part of the whole itself, as the body is the material part of man. But the name signifying that whence the nature of species is taken, with the exclusion of designated matter, signifies the formal part. And therefore humanity is signified as a certain form, and is spoken of as that which is the form of the whole; not indeed as if it were superadded to the essential parts, namely, to form and matter, as for instance the form of a house is superadded to its integral parts; but rather it is form that is the whole, that is, embracing form and matter, yet with the exclusion of those things by means of which matter is found to be designated. So, therefore, it is clear that the name man and the name humanity signify the essence of man, but in different modes, as has been said, since the name man signifies it as a whole, inasmuch as it does not exclude the designation of matter but contains it implicitly and indistinctly, as for instance it has been said that the genus contains the difference. And therefore the name man is predicated of individuals. But the name humanity signifies the essence as a part, since it does not contain in its signification anything except what is of man inasmuch as he is man, and because it excludes all designation of matter; whence it is not predicated of individual man. And for this reason likewise the name essence sometimes is found predicated of a thing, for Socrates is said to be an essence, and sometimes it is denied, as for instance it is said that the essence of Socrates is not Socrates.

CHAPTER THREE

HAVING seen, therefore, what is signified by the name of essence in composite substances, we should see in what mode it is disposed towards (*se habeat ad*) the ratio of genus, species, and difference. Since, however, that to which the ratio of genus or species or difference applies is predicated concerning this signate singular, it is impossible that the ratio of the universal, namely, that of genus and of species, should apply to essence according as it is signified by means of the partitive mode, as for instance by the name humanity or animality. And therefore Avicenna says ¹⁸ that rationality is not the difference, but the principle of difference. And for the same reason humanity is not species nor is animality genus. Similarly, also, it cannot be said that the ratio of genus or of species applies to essence according as essence is a certain thing existing apart from singulars, as the Platonists were accustomed to assert, since thus genus and species would not be predicated of this individual. For it cannot be said that Socrates is what is separated from him, nor again that the separated conduces to the cognition of a singular. And therefore it follows that the ratio of genus or species applies to essence according as it is signified in the mode of a whole, as for instance by the name of man or animal, according as it contains implicitly and indistinctly all that is in the individual.

But nature or essence taken thus can be considered in two ways. In one mode according to its proper ratio, and this is the absolute consideration of it, and in this mode nothing is true

¹⁸ Avicenna, Met., V, 6, f. 90 b A.

concerning it except what applies to it according to this mode, whence whatever else is attributed to it is a false attribution. For example, to man inasmuch as he is man rational and animal applies and the other things which fall within his definition. White or black, however, and whatsoever of this mode, which is not of the ratio of humanity, does not apply to man inasmuch as he is man. Accordingly, if it were asked whether this nature thus considered can be said to be one or more than one, neither ought to be conceded, because each is outside the concept of humanity, and either one can happen to it (*accidere*). For if plurality were to belong to the concept of humanity, it could never be one although nevertheless it is one according as it is in Socrates. Similarly, if unity were to belong to its ratio, then would it be one and the same of Socrates and of Plato, nor could it be multiplied (*plurificari*) in many. It is considered in another mode according to the existence (*esse*) which it has in this or that, and in this mode something is predicated concerning it by means of accident (*per accidens*), by reason of that in which it is, as for instance it is said that man is white because Socrates is white, although this does not apply to man inasmuch as he is man.

But this nature has a twofold existence: having one existence in singulars and another in the soul, and according to both of the two, accident follows upon the nature spoken of, and in singulars also it has a manifold existence according to the diversity of the singulars. And nevertheless to this very nature according to its primary consideration, that is to say, its absolute one, none of these (existences) ought to belong. For it is false to say that the essence of man, inasmuch as he is man, has existence in this singular, because if existence in this singular applied to man as man, then (man) would never exist outside of this singular. Similarly, also, if it applied to man as man not to exist in this singular, (man) would never exist in

it. But it is true to say that man as man does not have to be in this singular or in that or in the soul. Therefore it is clear that the nature of man absolutely considered abstracts from any sort of existence, yet in such wise that it does not exclude any of them. And this nature so considered is what is predicated of all individuals. Still it cannot be said that the ratio of universal applies to nature thus considered, because unity and community belong to the principle of the universal, whereas to human nature neither of these (two) applies according to its absolute consideration. For if community belonged to the concept of man, then in whatsoever humanity were found community would be found. And this is false because in Socrates there is not found any community, but whatever is in him is individuated. Similarly, also, it cannot be said that the ratio of genus or of species belongs to human nature according to the existence which it has in individuals, because human nature is not found in individuals according to its unity so that it is a one appropriate to all, which the ratio of the universal demands. It follows, therefore, that the ratio of species applies to human nature according to that existence (*esse*) which it has in the intellect. For human nature itself has an existence in the intellect abstracted from all individuations, and therefore it has a uniform ratio to all individuals which are outside the soul, according as it is equally the likeness (*similitudo*) of all and leads to the understanding of all inasmuch as they are men. And because it has such a relation to all individuals, the intellect discovers the ratio of species and attributes it to it (human nature). Whence the Commentator observes in the first book of the *De Anima*¹⁹ that intellect is what actuates (*agit*) universality in things. Avicenna also says this in his *Metaphysics*.²⁰ Whence, although this intellectual nature has

¹⁹ Averroes, In De An., I, com. 8, f. 4.

²⁰ Avicenna, Met., V, i, f., 87 b E, 87 a C- b D.

the ratio of universal according as it is compared to things which are outside of the soul because it is a single likeness of all, nevertheless according as it has existence in this intellect or that it is a certain particular intellected species. And therefore the error of the Commentator in book three on the *De Anima* ²¹ is clear, seeing that he wished to conclude from the universality of the intellected form to the unity of the intellect in all men; because there is no universality of that form according to the existence which it has in the intellect, but according as it is referred to things as a likeness of things. Thus, too, if there were a single corporeal statue representing many men, it is clear that the image or species of the statue would have an existence singular and proper according as it existed in this matter, but it would have a ratio of community according as it were a common thing representing many. And because to human nature according to its absolute consideration belongs what is predicated of Socrates, and since the ratio of species does not belong to it according to its absolute consideration, but follows from accidents which issue from it according to the existence which it has in the intellect, therefore the name of species is not predicated of Socrates so that it is said that Socrates is a species, which would necessarily happen if the ratio of species belonged to man according to the existence which he has in Socrates, or according to man's absolute consideration, namely, inasmuch as he is man; for whatever applies to man inasmuch as he is man is predicated of Socrates. Yet to be predicated applies to genus by virtue of itself (*per se*), since it is posited in its definition. For predication is a certain thing which is perfected by means of the action of the intellect composing and dividing, having in the very thing as its foundation the unity of those things of which one is asserted of the other. Whence the ratio of predicability can be included in the

²¹ Averroes, In De An., III, com, 5, f, 117.

ratio of this mode of intention which is genus, which, similarly, is perfected by means of an act of the intellect. Yet, nevertheless, that to which the intellect attributes the intention of predication, composing the one with the other, is not the very intention of genus but rather that to which the intellect attributes the intention of genus, as for instance what is signified by the name animal. Thus, therefore, it is clear how essence or nature is disposed towards (*se habet ad*) the ratio of species, because the ratio of species does not belong to those things which are appropriate to it according to its absolute consideration, nor likewise does it belong to the accidents which issue from it according to the existence which it has outside the soul, as whiteness or blackness. But it does belong to the accidents which issue from it according to the existence which it has in the intellect. And it is according to this mode that the ratio of genus and of difference also applies to it.

CHAPTER FOUR

NOW IT remains to see through what mode essence exists in separate substances, namely, in the soul, in intelligences and in the first cause. But although all grant the simplicity of the first cause, yet certain ones strive to introduce a composition of form and matter in intelligences and in the soul. The author of this position appears to have been Avicbron, the writer of the book *Fons Vitae*.²² But this is opposed to what is commonly said by philosophers, seeing that they call them substances separated from matter and prove them to be devoid of all matter. The most powerful reason for the assertion is (taken) from the power (*virtute*) of understanding which is in them (separate substances). For we see that forms are not intelligible in act except according as they are separated from matter and its conditions, nor are they made intelligible in act except by the power (*per virtutem*) of intelligent substance, inasmuch as they are received in it and inasmuch as they are actuated by virtue of it. Whence it is necessary that in any intelligent substance there be entire immunity from matter in such wise that they neither have a material part to them nor yet exist as a form impressed in matter, as is the case respecting material forms. Nor can anyone say that intelligibility is not impeded by any sort of matter, but only by corporeal matter. For if this impediment were by reason of corporeal matter alone, since matter is not spoken of as corporeal except inasmuch as it stands under corporeal form, then it would follow

²² Cf. Baeumker, *Avencebrolis (Ibn Gebirol), Fons Vitae*, Münster, 1895.

necessarily that matter would impede intelligibility by means of its corporeal form. And this cannot be, because the very corporeal form also is intelligible in act, just as other forms are, inasmuch as it is abstracted from matter. Wherefore in the soul or in an intelligence there is in no way a composition of matter and form so that essence might be taken in them in the mode in which it is taken in corporeal substances. But there is there (in them) a composition of form and existence; whence it is said in the comment on the ninth proposition of the book *De Causis*²³ that intelligence is having form and existence; and form is taken there for the very quiddity or simple nature.

But it is easy to see how this is. For whatever things are disposed towards (*se habent ad*) one another in such wise that one is the cause of the existence of the other, that which has the ratio of cause can possess existence without the other, but not conversely. But such is found to be the habitude of matter and form, because form gives existence to matter, and therefore it is impossible for matter to be without some form, yet it is not impossible for any form to exist without matter, for form inasmuch as it is form does not depend on matter. But if any forms should be discovered which cannot exist save in matter, this happens to them inasmuch as they are distant from the first principle which is the first and pure act. Whence those forms which have the greatest propinquity to the first principle are forms subsisting by virtue of themselves (*per se*) without matter. For form does not require matter according to its entire genus, as has been said, and forms of this sort are intelligences. And therefore it is not necessary that the essences or quiddities of these substances be anything save the very form. Therefore the essence of a composite substance and the essence of a simple

²³ Cf. Bardenhewer, "Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift Über das Reine Gute" bekannt unter dem Namen "Liber de Causis", Fribourg-en-Bas, 1882, No. 8, p. 173.

substance differ in that the essence of a composite substance is not form alone but embraces form and matter, whereas the essence of a simple substance is form alone. And from this two other differences are derived. One is that the essence of a composite substance can be signified as a whole or as a part, which happens according to the designation of the matter, as has been stated. And therefore the essence of a composite thing is not predicated in any mode whatsoever of the composite thing itself; for it cannot be said that man is his quiddity. But the essence of a simple thing, which is its form, cannot be signified except as a whole, since there is nothing there except the form as form receiving, and, therefore, in whatever mode the essence of a simple substance is taken it is predicated of the substance. Whence Avicenna says ²⁴ that the quiddity of a simple (substance) is itself simple, because there is not anything else receptive of the quiddity. The second difference is that the essences of composite things, seeing that they are received in designated matter, are multiplied according to its division, whence it results that some things are the same in species and diverse numerically. But since the essence of simple substance is not received in matter, there cannot be there any such multiplication. And therefore it follows necessarily that in these substances more than one individual of the same species are not found, but however many individuals there are, just so many are the species, as Avicenna expressly says.²⁵ (*scil.* "A species of this mode is one in number.")

And indeed substances of this sort, although they are forms alone without matter, still do not have an entire simplicity of nature so that they are pure act; on the contrary, they have a mixture of potency, which is evident thus: for whatsoever does not belong to the concept of essence or quiddity is some-

²⁴ Avicenna, *Met.*, V, 5, f. 90 a F.

²⁵ Avicenna, *Met.*, V, 2, f. 87 a A.

thing accruing from without and effecting a composition with the essence, since no essence can be conceived without those things which are parts of essence. But every essence or quiddity can be conceived aside from the condition that something be known concerning its existence, for I can conceive what a man or phoenix is and still not know whether it has existence in the nature of things. Therefore it is clear that existence is something other than essence or quiddity, unless perhaps there be something the quiddity of which is its very existence. And this thing can only be one and primary, because it is impossible that a multiplication of anything should be effected except by virtue of the addition of some difference, as the nature of genus is multiplied into species either by virtue of this, that the form is received in diverse matters, just as the nature of species is multiplied in diverse individuals, or by virtue of this, that it is one thing absolutely but another as received in something, as for instance if there were a certain separated heat it would be other than a non-separated heat from its very separation. But if some thing is posited which is existence alone such that the existence itself is subsisting, this existence does not receive an addition of difference, since then it would not be existence only but existence and beyond that some form; and much less does it receive an addition of matter because then it would be not a subsisting existence but a material existence. Wherefore it is clear that a thing such that it is its own existence cannot be except as one (unique). Whence it follows necessarily that in anything whatsoever except this (the unique) its existence must be one thing and its quiddity or nature or form another. Accordingly, in intelligences there is an existence over and beyond form, and therefore it has been said that an intelligence is form and existence.

But all that belongs to anything is either caused from principles of its nature, as for instance risibility in man, or accrues

to it through some extrinsic principle, as for instance light in air from the influence of the sun. But it cannot be that existence itself should be caused by the form or quiddity of the thing, caused, I say, as by means of an efficient cause, because thus something would be the cause of itself and would bring its very self into existence, which is impossible. Therefore it follows that everything such that its existence is other than its nature has existence from another (*ab alio*). And because everything which exists by virtue of another is reduced to that which exists in virtue of itself (*per se*), as to its first cause, it follows that there must be something which is the cause of the existence (*causa essendi*) of all things, because it is very existence alone; otherwise the causes would proceed to infinity, since everything which is not existence alone would have a cause of its existence, as has been said. It is clear, therefore, that an intelligence is form and existence, and that it has its existence from the first being which is existence alone, and this is the first cause which is God. But everything which receives something from something (*aliquid ab aliquo*) is in potency in respect to that, and what is received in it is its act. Therefore it follows that the very quiddity or form which is the intelligence is in potency in respect to the existence which it receives from God, and that existence is received according to the mode of act. And thus potency and act are found in intelligences, yet not form and matter, except equivocally. Whence, too, to suffer, to receive, to be a subject and all things of this kind which are seen to belong to things by reason of matter, belong equivocally to intellectual substances and to corporeal substances, as the Commentator says in the third book of the *De Anima*.²⁶ And because, as has been said, the quiddity of an intelligence is the intelligence itself, therefore its quiddity or essence is the same thing as itself, and its existence, received from God, is that by

²⁶ Averroes, In De An., III, com. 14. f. 123.

means of which it subsists in the nature of things. And for this reason substances of this sort are said by some to be composed of that by virtue of which it is (*quo est*) and that which it is (*quod est*), or of that which it is and existence, as Boethius says.²⁷

And since potency and act are posited in intelligences it will not be difficult to find a multitude of intelligences, which would be impossible if there were no potency in them. Whence the Commentator says in the third book of the *De Anima*,²⁸ that if the nature of the possible intellect were unknown we should not be able to discover multiplicity in separate substances. Therefore the distinction of these in regard to one another is according to their grade (measure) of potency and act, so that a superior intelligence which is more proximate to the first (being) has more of act and less of potency, and so for others. And this is fulfilled in the human soul which holds the lowest grade among intellectual substances. Whence its possible intellect is disposed towards (*se habet ad*) intelligible forms just as first matter, which holds the lowest grade in sensible existence, is disposed towards sensible forms, as the Commentator remarks in book three on the *De Anima*.²⁹ And therefore the Philosopher³⁰ compares it to a tablet upon which nothing is written, and for this reason among other intelligible substances it has more potency. Accordingly, it is made to be so close to material things that the material thing is drawn to participate in its existence, so that from soul and body results one existence in one composite, although that existence according as it pertains to soul is not dependent upon the body. And therefore after that form which is in the soul are discovered

²⁷ Boethius, *De Hebdomadis*, PL, t. 64, col. 1311 C.

²⁸ Averroes, *In De Anima*, III, com. 5, f. 118.

²⁹ Averroes, *In De Anima*, III, com. 5, p. 113

³⁰ Aristotle, *De Anima*, III, 430 a 1.

other forms having more potency and more propinquity to matter. In these, too, is found order (*ordo*) and grade (measure: *gradus*) all the way through to the first forms of elements which are in the greatest propinquity to matter. Accordingly, they do not have any operation except according to the exigency of active and passive qualities, and of the others by which matter is disposed to form.

CHAPTER FIVE

HAVING understood the above, one knows clearly how essence is found in different things. For there is a threefold way of having an essence in substances. One way is like God, whose essence is His very existence; and therefore some philosophers are found who say that God does not have a quiddity or essence, since His essence is none other than His existence. And from this it follows that God is not in a genus, since everything which is in a genus must have a quiddity in addition to its existence, seeing that the quiddity or nature of genus or species is not distinguished according to a principle of nature in those things of which it is genus and species, but existence is different in different things. And indeed if we say that God is existence alone it is not necessary that we fall into the error of those who said that God is that universal existence in which everything exists formally. For the existence which is God is of a condition such that no addition can be made to it. Whence by virtue of its very purity it is existence distinct from every other existence, as for instance a certain separated color would by its very separation be different from non-separated color. For this reason it is observed in the comment on the ninth proposition of the book *De Causis*⁸¹ that the individuation of the first cause which is existence alone is by means of its pure goodness. But common existence, just as it does not include an addition to its concept, so, too, does not include in its concept any exclusion of addition, because if this were so nothing

⁸¹ *De Causis*, cf. Bardenhewer, op. cit., No. 8, p. 173.

could be conceived to exist in which something over and above were added to existence. Similarly, too, although a being be existence alone, it does not follow that it should be wanting in the rest of the perfections and nobilities. Indeed God has the perfections which are in all genera, and for this reason He is called perfect simply, as the Philosopher and Commentator say in the fifth book of the *Metaphysics*,⁸² but He has these (perfections) in a more excellent mode than other things, because in Him they are one, but in other things they have diversity. And this is because all of these perfections belong to Him according to his simple existence; just as, if someone were able by means of one quality to effect the operations of all qualities, in that one quality he would have all qualities, so God in His very existence has all perfections.

According to the second mode essence is found in created intellectual substances in which the essence is other than their existence, although their essence is without matter. Whence their existence is not absolute but received and therefore according to the capacity of the receiving nature, but their nature or quiddity is absolute and not received in any matter. And therefore it is said in the book *De Causis* ⁸³ that intelligences are infinite from beneath and finite from above. For they are finite in respect to their existence which they receive from above, but they are not finite from below, since their forms are not limited to the capacity of any matter receiving them. And therefore in such substances there is not found a multitude of individuals in one species, as has been said, except in the instance of the human soul because of the body which is united to it. And although its individuation depends on the body as its occasion inasmuch as its (that of the individuation) beginning is con-

⁸² Aristotle, *Met.*, Δ, 1021 b 30; Averroes, *In Met.*, V, com. 21, f. 62 a 10-13.

⁸³ *De Causis*, cf. Bardenhewer, *op. cit.*, No. 4, p. 167.

cerned, seeing that the soul does not acquire individuated existence except in a body of which it is the act, still it does not follow that, the body being removed, the individuation would perish; because, since it (the soul) has absolute existence from the time individuated existence is acquired, in that it is made the form of this body, that existence always remains individuated. And therefore Avicenna says ³⁴ that the individuation of souls and their multitude depends upon the body in respect to their beginning but not in respect to their end. And because in those substances quiddity is not the same as existence therefore they are capable of being ordered in a predicament (category) and for this reason genus, species, and difference are found in them, although their proper differences are hidden from us. For in sensible things likewise the essential differences themselves are unknown; hence they are signified by means of the accidental differences which arise from their essential differences, as a cause is signified by means of its effect, as for instance biped is posited as the difference of man. But the proper accidents of immaterial substances are not known to us, and accordingly their differences cannot be signified by us either by virtue of themselves or by virtue of their accidental differences.

Still one ought to know that genus and difference are not taken in the same mode in those substances and in sensible substances, because in sensible substances genus is taken from that which is material in the thing, but difference is taken from that which is formal in it. Whence Avicenna says in the beginning of his book *De Anima* ³⁵ that form in things composed of matter and form "is the simple difference of that which is constituted from it," not, however, so that the form itself is the difference, but because it is the principle of the difference,

³⁴ Avicenna, *De An.*, V, c. 3, f. 14 b.

³⁵ Avicenna, *De An.*, I, i, f 1 b E — 1a.

as he says in his *Metaphysics*.⁸⁶ And such difference is called simple difference, because it is taken from what is a part of the quiddity of the thing, namely, from the form. But since immaterial substances are simple quiddities, difference in them cannot be taken from that which is a part of the quiddity but from the whole quiddity. And therefore in the beginning of the *De Anima*⁸⁷ Avicenna says that "simple difference . . . is not possessed except in those species the essences of which are composed of matter and form." Similarly also in these substances genus is taken from the whole essence, yet in a different mode. For one separate substance agrees with others in immateriality, and these substances differ from one another in their grade of perfection according to their recession from potentiality and their accession to pure act. And therefore in them genus is appropriated from that which ensues from them inasmuch as they are immaterial, as intellectuality or something of this sort. Difference, however, is appropriated from that which ensues from the grade of perfection in them and this is unknown to us. And yet it is not necessary that these differences be accidental, because they are according to greater and less perfection which does not diversify species; for the grade of perfection in receiving the same form does not diversify species, just as more white and less white in participating in the same principle of whiteness (does not), but a different grade of perfection in the very forms or natures participated does diversify species, as for instance nature proceeds by grades from plants to animals through certain (levels) which are mediate between animals and plants, according to the Philosopher in the eighth book of the *De Animalibus*.⁸⁸ Nor again is it necessary that the division of intellectual substances be always

⁸⁶ Avicenna, *Met.*, V, 5, f. 90 b A.

⁸⁷ Avicenna, *De An.*, I, i, f. 1 b E.

⁸⁸ Aristotle, *De Hist. Animal.*, VIII, 588 b 4-14.

through two true differences, because it is impossible for this to happen in all things, as the Philosopher says in the eleventh book of the *De Animalibus*.³⁹

In the third mode essence is found in substances composed of matter and form, in which also existence is received and finite because they have existence from another, and again their nature or quiddity is received in signated matter. And therefore they are finite from above and below, and in them furthermore a multiplication of individuals in one species is possible, because of the division of signated matter. And how their essence is disposed towards (*se habeat ad*) logical intentions has been discussed above.

³⁹ Aristotle, *De Part. An.*, I, 642 b 5.

CHAPTER SIX

IT NOW remains to see how essence exists in accidents, for how it exists in all substances has been discussed. And because, as has been said, essence is what is signified by means of definition it is necessary that they (accidents) possess essence in the mode in which they have definition. But they have an incomplete definition because they cannot be defined unless a subject is posited in their definition; and this is because they do not have existence by virtue of themselves (*per se*) freed from (*absolutum*) the subject. But just as a substantial existence ensues from form and matter when composited, so, too, an accidental existence ensues from accident and subject when the accident advenes to the subject. And therefore neither has the substantial form itself complete essence, nor has matter; because likewise in the definition of substantial form it is necessary to posit that of which it is the form, and so its definition is by virtue of the addition of something which is outside its genus, as is also the definition of the accidental form. Whence in the definition of soul body is posited by the naturalist who considers the soul only inasmuch as it is the form of a physical body. But nevertheless there is a difference between substantial form and accidental form because, just as substantial form does not have an absolute existence by virtue of itself without that to which it advenes, so neither does that to which it advenes, namely, matter. And therefore from the conjunction of both ensues that existence in which the thing subsists by virtue of itself (*per se*), and from them is effected a unity by virtue of itself (*unum per se*: a substantial unity) for the reason that

a certain essence ensues from their conjunction. Whence the form, although considered in itself (*in se*) it does not possess the complete ratio of essence, is nevertheless part of a complete essence. But that to which the accident advenes is a being complete in itself (*in se*), subsisting in its own existence; which certain existence naturally precedes the accident which supervenes to it. And therefore the supervening accident, from its conjunction with that to which it advenes, does not cause that existence in which the thing subsists, through which the thing is a being by virtue of itself (*ens per se*), but it causes a certain secondary existence, without which the subsisting thing can be conceived, as the first can be conceived without the second. Whence from an accident and a subject is not effected a unity by virtue of itself (*unum per se*: substantial unity), but a unity by virtue of accident (*unum per accidens*: accidental unity). And therefore from their conjunction a certain essence does not result, as from the conjunction of form with matter. For which reason an accident has neither the ratio of complete essence, nor is it a part of complete essence; but just as it is being in a certain respect (*secundum quid*), so also it has essence in a certain respect.

But because that which is in the greatest degree and most truly asserted in any genus whatsoever is the cause of those things which are posterior in that genus, as for instance fire which is the extreme of hotness is the cause of heat in hot things, as is also said in the second book of the *Metaphysics*,⁴⁰ therefore substance, which is first in the genus of being, having essence most truly and in the greatest degree, is necessarily the cause of accidents which participate the principle of being only secondarily and, as it were, in a certain respect (*secundum quid*). This however happens in diverse ways. For since the parts of a substance are matter and form, therefore

⁴⁰ Aristotle, Met. a, 993 b 24.

certain accidents principally follow upon form, and others upon matter. Moreover, some form is found the existence of which does not depend on matter, as the intellective soul does not; but matter does not exist except by means of form. Whence in accidents which ensue from form there is something which has no communication with matter, as for instance to intellect, which is not by means of any corporeal organ, as the Philosopher proves in the third book of the *De Anima*.⁴¹ But some of the things ensuing from the form have communication with matter, as for instance to sense, and things of this sort; but no accident ensues from matter without communication with form. Yet in these accidents which ensue from matter there is found a certain diversity. For certain accidents ensue from matter according to an order which they have to a special form, as for instance masculine and feminine in animals, the diversity of which is reduced to matter, as is said in the tenth book of the *Metaphysics*.⁴² Whence the form of animal being removed, the accidents do not remain except equivocally. Certain (accidents) ensue from matter according to an order which it has to a general form, and therefore, the special form being removed, they still remain (in the matter), as for instance blackness of skin is in the Ethiopian from a mixture of elements and not by reason of his soul, and therefore remains in him after death. And because each and every thing is individuated from its matter and disposed in a genus or a species by virtue of its form, therefore accidents which ensue from matter are accidents of the individual, according to which individuals of the same species differ from one another. But the accidents which ensue from form are proper passions of the genus or of the species, whence they are found in all things participating in the nature of the genus or of the species, as

⁴¹ Aristotle, *De An.*, 429 b 3.

⁴² Aristotle, *Met.*, I, 1058 b 21.

for instance risibility in man ensues from the form, since a laugh arises from some apprehension in the soul of a man.

One should know, too, that accidents are sometimes caused by the essential principles according to perfect act, as for instance heat in fire which is always hot in act; but at times (they are caused) only according to an aptitude, with completion accruing to them from an exterior agent, as for instance transparency in the air which is completed by means of a lucid external body. And in such instances the aptitude is an inseparable accident, but the complement, which ensues to it from some principle which is outside the essence of the thing or which does not enter into its constitution, will be separable, as for instance to be moved and things of this sort.

One should know therefore that in accidents genus, species and difference are taken in a mode other than that in which they are taken in substances. For since in substances there is effected from the substantial form and the matter a unity by virtue of itself (*per se unum*: a substantial unity), a certain nature resulting from their conjunction which is properly placed in the predicament (category) of substance, therefore in substances the concrete names which signify the composite are properly said to be in a genus, whether species or genus, as man or animal. However, neither form nor matter is in a predicament (category) in this mode except through reduction, as the former is said to be in a genus. But a substantial unity (*unum per se*) is not effected from an accident and its subject, and therefore no nature results from their conjunction to which the intention of genus or species can be attributed. Accordingly, the accidental names expressing a concretion, as for instance white man or musician, are not placed in a predicament (category), either as species or as genus, except by reduction, for they can be placed in a predicament only according to what is

signified in the abstract, as for instance white or musical. And because accidents are not composed of matter and form, therefore in them it is not possible to take the genus from the matter and the difference from the form as in composite substances. But the genus must be taken primarily from its very mode of being inasmuch as being is asserted in diverse modes of the ten predicamental genera (categories) in accordance with the (order of) prior and posterior. So likewise it is called quantity according as it is the measure of substance and quality inasmuch as it is said to be a disposition of substance, and likewise for the others (predicamental genera), as the Philosopher states in the fourth of the *Metaphysics*.⁴³ Indeed, difference in accidents is taken from the diversity of the principles from which they are caused. And because proper passions are caused from proper principles of the subject, therefore a subject is posited in their definition in place of difference, if they are defined abstractly (*in absoluto*), according to which manner of definition they are properly in a genus, as for instance it is said that snub-nosedness is a curvature of the nose. But the converse would hold if their definition were taken concretely. For thus the subject would be posited in their definition as their genus, seeing that they would then be defined as composite substances are, in which the ratio of the genus is taken from matter, as we say that a snub-nose is a curved nose. If one accident be the principle of another accident, the case is similar to the above, as for instance the principle of relation is action and passion and quantity; and therefore according to this the Philosopher divides relation in the *Metaphysics*.⁴⁴ But since the proper principles of accidents are not always manifest, therefore sometimes we take the difference of accidents from their effects, as condensing and dispersing are called differences of color, which

⁴³ Aristotle, *Met.*, Γ, 1003 a 33 — b 10.

⁴⁴ Aristotle, *Met.*, Δ, 1020 b 26 ss.

are caused from the abundance or paucity of light from which the different species of color result.

Thus, therefore, it is clear in what mode essence is in substances and in accidents, and in what mode it is in composite substances and in simple substances, and after what manner universal logical intentions are found in all these; with the exception of the First which is the extreme of simplicity, and to which because of its simplicity neither the ratio of genus, nor of species, nor, consequently, definition applies.

In which may the end and consummation of this discourse be. Amen.

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GLOSSARY

Absolute: Freed or relatively freed from conditions of matter and hence from contingency. Abstracted from individuating conditions.

Act and Potency: To be understood by the proportion of any two things to each other reciprocally. Act: being determined. Potency: being determinable. Act and potency always import a disposition or the order of a change.

Accident: That which does not have being in itself, but from another. (*Ens in alio*). Accidents are additions which advene to a substance and bring it to a completion.

Act of Being: Existence. An act, being determined, or the determined, or a terminated nature.

Analysis: A grasp of organization by a scrutiny of relations and terms composing simple and complex substances, and completed by an apprehension of the relevant operation or operations involved. a. Platonic Analysis: Quality is eliminated, leaving quantity and relations. Platonists are apt to reify the relations and to invest them with autonomic energy. b. Aristotelian Analysis: Includes Platonic analysis and something in addition. Platonic analysis supplies the formal cause, but in addition there is the material and efficient cause, not to mention the final cause. Essences must needs be assigned to their existential operations or natures to become actual. Platonic essences are potentialities or possibles, but in Aristotelian analysis the process in nature supplements the formal statement.

Being: A transcendental predicate, (*Ens*), that which is, the actual nature of a thing or existence independent of the knowing mind. The principle of being (existence) and the principle of being primarily intelligible must be in some sense commensurate if being and truth are related. Modes of operating and knowing are said to follow upon the

mode of being. Being, then, is the formal object of the intellect *per se primo*.

Body and Soul, Union of: A substantial unity and not an accidental unity.

Composite: A concretion of matter and form or the advention of a form into a matter apt to receive it.

Composition, Accidental: That which unites the accidents to the substance in which they inhere.

Creature: A created thing. Each thing is and exists by its assigned act and proper measure of perfection as such a mode of finite being in the infinite order derived from God.

Disposition: Always imports an order of something which has parts. The arrangement of that which has parts as ordered in respect to place, to potency, or to quality; hence relational order in one respect. See Act and Potency.

Ens per se existens: A being existing by virtue of itself or its ordained nature. Since a being of this sort exists as a whole and in no wise as a part of another being it exists also *in se*.

Essence: Is in relation to the act of existence a potentiality really distinct from existence, but actual in virtue of existence. It is *that by virtue of which* the intellect understands *that which* is necessarily and primarily the being of a nature or substance. Essence, then, is that by which a thing is necessarily and primarily as intelligible, or that by virtue of which a thing is constituted in a determinate degree of primarily intelligible being. By strict distinction an essence is a being of reason as distinguished from a being of nature, and hence an essence is the formal cause of knowing and is that in the active intellect by which a nature is known when it is known. In a realist or quasi-realist doctrine essence must express the real nature of being; consequently, it cannot be merely an arbitrarily imposed sign.

Habit: Disposition to act in a fixed or ordained mode, or a fixed and determinate operation. An aptitude is a disposition towards an order of operation, which has not become fixed and is therefore easily alterable. See above, Act and Potency and Disposition.

Hierarchy: Aristotelian, a continuous order of differentiated beings having a beginning, a middle and an end. Those properties which remain unchanged in a scheme of substances when the substances undergo alteration. Further, the relation of one grade of being or substances to others.

Intelligence, Human: Last in the order of intelligences and first in the order of material forms.

Intention: First Intention, the assimilated sensible in the sense; hence, a potential sign, or the potential sign as actual inasmuch as it signifies an individuated thing. Second Intention, Essence, or the formal equivalent by virtue of which that which is known is known in its necessary and primary being.

Materia Signata: The lowest grade of matter endowed with merely an intrinsic aptitude for occupying certain relative dimensions of space. The basis of numerical multiplicity.

Nature: The operation which anything is adapted or disposed to perform. Anything whatsoever possesses a constitutive principle by virtue of which it is that which it is and performs that which it performs—its proper perfection—or the aspect of its being which differentiates it. Nature is thought of as the opposite of essence in both the order of abstraction and the order of signation. Things must be apt to unite and possess unity in potency before they possess it in act.

Objects (Things): Must be apt to unite and possess unity in potency before they possess it in act. In the natural order to be understood as natures known by means of essences.

Operation, Order of: Action to Passion.

Potency: Active, a power to operate; passive, a capacity to receive. A power is to be understood as that which has a disposition or order to action.

Privation: A negation in the subject. The absence of the formal principle required by the state in which the matter actually is. A privation : substance : : a negation : subject.

Quality: A disposition of capacities or passive potencies, for the sake of an act; hence the order of operations according to which such a disposition of passive potencies become actual.

Quantity: The passive diffusion of matter in a three dimensional medium, and the first accident of material substance.

Quiddity: An expression used as a neutral term between nature and essence. Usually understood however as equivalent to essence. It stands for the peculiar nature of the thing, not however as the thing is as individuated by conditions of matter but as it is necessarily and primarily according to its mode of being.

Relation: A general sign for a possible modification between a and b, or the respect in which one thing stands to another thing, as of anything to something. *Ad aliquid*: the order of one thing to another.

Signs, Order of: Genus, difference and property are all predicated necessarily; the distinctions among them rest not on the way in which they are asserted of things, but on the mode in which they signify the things signified by their subjects. Hence such signs are terms in the purely rational science of logic.

Substance: Secondary, an analytic analogue (similitude of being, i.e. a nature) as expressed by genus, species, property and difference in the rational order. Aristotle observes that primary substance (a nature) is to secondary substance (the formulae in the intellect) as species is to genus.

Truth: A transcendental predicate—conformity of essence to

nature, or the adequation of the thing to the intellect and vice-versa.

Unity, Substantial: *Unum per se*—That which is one by virtue of its proper or intrinsic operation. It is opposed to *unum per accidens* or one by accident. A substantial unity is one by virtue of the operation by which it exists necessarily. An accidental unity is one merely by conjunction as the parts of an aggregate. *Per se*: brought into existence by a proper act, but indicating a measure of dependence from God.

